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SAPC-17206

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15 July 1957

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : AQUATONE Communications Load

1. You will remember several discussions in the Director's morning Staff meetings of the enormous and steadily growing communications traffic of the Agency. At one of these meetings it was pointed out that AQUATONE alone is responsible for a significant fraction of the total traffic. Following that meeting I asked the AQUATONE Project Communications Officer to survey the traffic generated by the Project with a view to determining whether, taking account of the subject matter, quality and draftsman-ship of the traffic, he believed that any important reduction of volume could be achieved.

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2. A basic fact about the traffic generated by this Project is that nearly half of the total represents

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Taking account of this situation as well as the whole character of the Project communications arrangements, the Project Communications Officer concludes that a significant reduction in traffic could be reached in only three ways:

- a. The scheduling of penetration missions at least two weeks in advance.
- b. The launching of such missions with no close control by this Headquarters.
- c. The deactivation of one (or more) overseas bases.

I believe you will agree with me that, in view of our dependence on weather information from Suitland and the political requirement for close control of these operations, a. and b. above are impracticable. The elimination of

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one of our three overseas bases will presumably be accomplished within three or four months but cannot be accomplished much sooner.

25X1C 3. Approaching the problem from a different direction, our active traffic [ ] can roughly be classified by subject matter. The three largest components in such a classification by content are those having to do with: Operational matters, Materiel and Logistics matters, and Administration. By a considerable margin the second category accounts currently for the largest number of [ ] messages. I have myself investigated the feasibility of handling such communications as requisitions for supplies, reports of arrival of shipments, and the like by dispatch rather than by wire. I have concluded that such a procedure would double the lead time between the initiation of a requirement in the Field and the filling of that requirement. This I believe could have a crippling effect and I propose therefore to continue our present practice of handling this traffic by electrical transmission. 25X1C

4. As to the other two categories, I am satisfied that Operations' traffic is being held to a minimum, and I can report that it is terse in draftsmanship, sometimes to the point of obscurity. Traffic on administrative matters, which includes Security, is at times voluminous. Our experience has been, however, that prompt handling of both Security and Personnel matters is essential, both to maintain morale and for efficiency. We have also found it necessary at times to engage in rather extended discussion of administrative matters with Detachment Commanders in order to ensure their understanding of Headquarters' policies and decisions. I conclude there may be some room for compression in this category but not very great.

5. I fear the over-all conclusion to be drawn from the foregoing is that no major reduction in the volume of AQUATONE traffic is feasible until one of our bases is deactivated. In the meanwhile, we will of course make every effort to avoid unnecessary communications. I am submitting this somewhat pessimistic report to you so that you and the Director will be aware that we have not been inattentive of this problem.

[ ]

RICHARD M. BISSELL, JR.  
Project Director

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Attachment:

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